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ARGUMENTS IN FAVOR OF A BOND ISSUE AGAINST A SPECIAL TAX LEVY

WITH THE FIRST A SPLENDID SYSTEM OF ROADS MAY BE HAD, AT PRACTICALLY NO COST, WHILE WITH THE LATTER THE COST IS PROHIBITIVE, AND YET NO ROADS.

WE CHALLENGE ANY CITIZEN

EITHER ON THE STUMP OR THROUGH THE COLUMNS OF THIS PAPER, TO A DISCUSSION OF THE ADVANTAGES OF THESE TWO METHODS FOR ROAD IMPROVEMENTS.

We shall in this brief article try to show why we personally favor a bond issue for road improvements over a special tax levy. It will be impossible, of course, in a limited space to touch this great question only in the high places, but hope to say enough to convince any thinking person that a bond issue is our only way of accomplishing the results so much hoped for.

We will consider first the Special Tax Levy District, and give what is planned by those who have presented a petition which is now pending before the Board of County Commissioners. This petition asks that District 4, Arcadia, be made a Special Tax District in which there is to be a four year special levy for road and bridge purposes, aggregating a sum of \$80,000. The first question asked is, what can we build with this sum of money in a district as large as No. 4? The second question will be, what will be the annual tax levy in order to take care of this debt within the period of four years, named in the petition?

Should we undertake to build permanent roads at the minimum cost of \$5,000 per mile, the full amount of this levy will not quite build the road known as the Dixie Highway, running north and south through District 4. To be accurate concerning this, it would lack just \$15,000 of being sufficient to do this work. To be perfectly frank concerning this proposition, the amount asked for in this petition does not meet the needs of the district, and is not in keeping with the spirit of progress that is being manifested throughout the state in road building.

Now, let's see what it will cost the tax payers annually, even to do this which when done, will not be at all satisfactory to the citizens. The amount of the county assessment of District No. 4 is approximately \$2,400,000. Hence in order to raise \$80,000 for road purposes, an annual levy of nine mills additional will be necessary to pay off this debt within the four year period, costing each tax payer \$9 additional per year for four years on each thousand dollars' worth of real estate that he owns. At the end of the four year period you will have to show for your money just sixteen miles of permanent roads. This, however, is a most ridiculous supposition, since the people in other parts of the district would not stand for having the entire sum spent on this one road.

But this is not all that we have to consider in regard to the Special Tax Levy. No money will be available under such a levy until the fall of 1918, and we shall be compelled to do no building until the fall of 1918, unless we borrow money on these road warrants.

Time and space are too valuable to speculate on a matter of this kind when one is provided with data from which concrete illustrations may be made. It is commonly known that the Murdock Drainage District of this county asked for bids for the removal of dirt, and received two bids, one for cash, and the other accepting time warrants. The cash bid was fifteen and one-half cents per cubic yard, and the time warrants bid was twenty-one and one-half cents per cubic yard, or nearly thirty-three and one-third per cent. greater.

Up to this time there have been excavated 170,000 cubic yards of dirt, which had the work been paid for in cash would have been a saving of \$2,500 to the tax payers of this drainage district. If the Murdock Drainage District had been a bond issue district instead of a special levy district, you can readily see how this would have injured to their advantage. There is positively not a single advantage in having a special tax levy over the bond issue system, while

there are many reasons why the bond issue should be accepted.

Now, in order that the advantages of a bond issue may be seen we shall take the same district, for the sake of comparison, and see what will be the cost to the tax payers in order to have a \$300,000 bond issue, and build \$300,000 worth of roads, covering every part of the district with roads that best meet the conditions of the various communities. First, a bond issue will provide cash within a period of four months. Polk county was at work on her roads in less than four months from the time the election was held. Second, we can build fifty miles of permanent roads, thus taking care of practically all the much traveled sections of the district, and have \$50,000 left with which to build clay oads and good graded roads in the more unsettled sections. Now, what will be the annual cost of this splendid system? The present annual income of the district for road purposes is approximately \$19,000. An increase of three mills will give us an additional income of a little more than \$7,000, or a total of \$26,000 per annum. The interest on the bond issue will cost \$15,000 a year, thus leaving \$11,000 a year with which to retire the bonds. Keep in mind that the interest is not accumulating, for this is being paid annually. Also keep in mind that every time we pay \$11,000 towards retiring the bonds, that the interest the following year will be on only \$289,000, while when we pay the interest the next succeeding year, the interest the following year will be on only \$278,000, and so on until the complete debt is wiped out. We made provision for taking care of the whole amount of the interest, but as you readily see we left out too much money to do this with, which can now be used for the upkeep of the roads. By paying off the bonds on the above calculation you will see that the entire debt will be wiped out in a little less than twenty-seven years. But you say there must be provision made for the upkeep of these roads. We have shown you that there is a small amount saved each year by having the interest grow less and less as the debt is reduced, and since much of the roads will be permanent roads the repairing expense will be greatly minimized.

However, there need be no fears as to the upkeep fund being ample, for if you will take the pains to look up the matter you will find that the county assessment is greatly increasing year by year, and with the roads built that are contemplated in this issue, it will be but a short period of time when the assessable value will be double that at the present time, and of course the income, instead of being \$26,000 per annum for road purposes will be double this amount, or \$52,000. This may then be used for making other roads, and keeping those already made in good condition.

Now, let's go back and see what all these good things will cost us. We have shown that the interest is taken care of, the original debt is taken care of, and money left. We have shown why the income will be greater than that upon which our calculations are based, due to increased assessments. All this is done at an increase of a three-mill levy. Three mills additional to what you are now paying will cost you exactly \$3 per year on each thousand dollars of assessment, and you have something to show for it, against the cost of \$9 a year if you should vote upon yourselves a special tax levy, and for which you get practically nothing for your money. Take your choice.

THE WEATHER.

Maximum temperature87
Minimum temperature61
Set55

SPLENDID FINANCIAL SHOWING OF BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

We take great pleasure in publishing the following financial statement furnished by Mr. B. Vance, accountant for the Board of County Commissioners:

Mr. Editor: At this time, when the Honorable Board of County Commissioners are being criticised for some things that were not done, permit me to call attention to one of the things that they have done that must speak volumes for their fidelity to the trust imposed upon them.

I refer to the condition of the general fund of the county on September 30th, 1916, the end of the present fiscal year, as compared to the report to the comptroller on December 31st, 1914, which report indicates approximately the condition of the fund when the present Board of Commissioners assumed control of the county affairs. I say approximately, because of the fact that the previous board met in January following the report to the comptroller, and issued warrants for outstanding bills, before the present board was sworn into office, and, to be exact, the amount of these warrants should be added to the net indebtedness of the fund as shown on December 31st.

Then—

Warrants outstanding December 31, 1914 \$28791.47
Cash in hands of treasurer same date 530.61

Net deficit December 31, 1914 \$28260.86

And now—
Balance in treasury September 30, 1916 \$5899.98
Warrants outstanding the same date 4922.96

Net balance September 30, 1916 \$ 977.02

In other words, there has been a net gain in this fund in the past two years of \$29,207.80, and that without raising the millage for this purpose, or without being parsimonious in the administration of the county's affairs.

I know that the News will be pleased to give these figures to the public that the people may know of some of the good things being accomplished by their representatives.

I might add that I have been doing the accounting work for the county since 1913, and this is the first time that the general fund has had "its head above water."

Sincerely,

B. VANCE,
Accountant.

MILITARY COMPANY ORGANIZED IN THE DE SOTO COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

ALREADY MORE THAN EIGHTY BOYS HAVE ENLISTED, AND THE INTEREST THAT IS BEING MANIFESTED INSURE THE SUCCESS OF THE MOVEMENT.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT EQUIPS

THE BOYS OF ANY HIGH SCHOOL WHERE MORE THAN SEVENTY-FIVE STUDENTS ARE ENLISTED. THE COMPANY WILL BE TAUGHT TO DRILL UNDER THE LATEST SYSTEM OF MILITARY TACTICS.

Captain George M. Lynch has recently organized a military system in the local high school. This course is optional with the student, however, but it is a well known fact that one of the best trainings a boy can have is in a military school. Every boy in the high school should join this company, as it will be a benefit in many ways, and he should do his best to make it a standard company. Under a new federal law the government will equip any high school that can get seventy-five boys as cadets. They will be furnished with uniforms and guns. A school that has 150 cadets will be fully equipped and an officer from the United States army will be placed in command of the drilling.

At present the DeSoto County High School has between eighty and ninety enlisted. The entire company is under the supervision of Captain Lynch, who is an old military man. There have been no permanent officers appointed yet. The students

who have attended a military school have been placed in temporary command. These are Robert Hollingsworth, Vernon Hollingsworth, Carl Hollingsworth and Joe Summins, each having one, two or three squads in charge.

Strict military discipline will be observed, and the members of the company will be taught to drill under the latest system of military tactics. All parents should urge their sons to join this company, because of the good it will do them individually, and because of the encouragement it will be, as this is the first high school in the state to take advantage of the government's offer.

At the drill yesterday afternoon a most extraordinary showing was made, considering the fact that the boys are all beginners.

There is a goodly lot of enthusiasm among the members, and in a month's time each squad will be ready to drill as good as a regular.

MINUTES OF HON. BOARD COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, OCTOBER SESSION

THE BOARD AFTER TRANSACTING MUCH BUSINESS ON THURSDAY AFTERNOON RECESSED UNTILL WEDNESDAY, THE 18TH.

Monday, October 2nd, 1916.

The Honorable Board of County Commissioners met in regular session on Monday, October 2nd, 1916, with Chairman Whitehurst presiding, and Commissioners W. G. Welles, John Hagan, W. M. Whitten and D. L. Skipper present.

The minutes of the last meeting were read, corrected and approved.

Notary bond of A. K. Albritton, with R. M. Stidham and W. U. Montgomery as sureties, was approved.

Tax Assessor Murphy tendered the 1916 tax roll with the following warrant:

State of Florida, County of DeSoto:

Personally appeared before me, H. G. Murphy, assessor of taxes for DeSoto County who, being duly sworn, says the above assessment roll contains a true statement and description of all persons and property in the above county of DeSoto subject to taxation or liable to be assessed thereon, and that the valuations thereof, so far as they were made by him, are just and correct so far as he has been able to ascertain.

H. G. MURPHY,
County Assessor of Taxes for DeSoto County.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 3rd day of October, A. D. 1916.

(Seal) B. VANCE,
Notary Public State of Florida.

My commission expires April 13, 1919.

We, the undersigned commissioners in and for the county of DeSoto, state of Florida, do hereby certify that we have carefully examined the foregoing assessment roll of said county for the year A. D. 1916, and have compared the original and two copies thereof, as required by section 27 of chapter 5596, laws of Florida, and find the same to be correct.

L. W. WHITEHURST,
W. G. WELLES,
W. M. WHITTEN,
D. L. SKIPPER,
JOHN HAGAN,
County Commissioners,
State of Florida, DeSoto County.

I hereby certify that the warrant

given under the hand of H. G. Murphy, county assessor of taxes, to Cyril Baldwin, tax collector, and attached to the assessment roll for the county of DeSoto for the year A. D. 1916, has been duly recorded on page 166 of the minutes of the board of county commissioners in and for the county aforesaid, as required by section 27 of chapter 5596, laws of Florida.

Given under my hand and seal of office this 3rd day of October, A. D. 1916.

(Seal) A. L. DURRANCE,
Clerk of the Circuit Court in and for the county of DeSoto. By B. Vance, Deputy Clerk.

Moved, seconded and carried, that Dr. Y. E. Wright be and he is hereby appointed inspector of school children for the northern part of the county, vice H. E. Cline, now with the state guard in Texas.

By motion, second and carried, Mrs. Lula Driggers was placed on the paper list at \$5 per month.

Moved, seconded and carried, that action on the petition to survey certain roads in districts 2, 3 and 4, the same having been filed with the board, be deferred until 10 o'clock a. m. Wednesday.

Commissioner Whitten filed a petition signed by H. L. Delaney and others, asking that an election be called to vote upon the proposition to form a road bond district in the Hall City-Palmdale section of the county.

The following resolution was, by motion seconded and carried, adopted:

Whereas, At the regular meeting of this board of county commissioners of DeSoto county, Florida, held during the regular meeting of June, 1916, it was there resolved by the said board to issue special drainage bonds for the special drainage district No. 10, DeSoto county, Florida, in the sum of \$18,000; and

Whereas, This was an error on the part of the said board of county commissioners, as the amount of bonds called for and the amount of bonds which should have been issued

(Continued on Second Page)

Mrs. James W. Mercer has returned from Zolfo, where she spent several days at the bedside of her ill brother, Mr. H. C. Bethea. We are glad to learn that Mr. Bethea is improving, but he is very ill yet.

W. G. Welles, president of the DeSoto National Bank, left yesterday afternoon for Jacksonville, where he will spend a day or so. Mr. Welles is on his vacation, and has not decided where he will go from Jacksonville.

TRUCK GROWERS ASSOCIATIONS AMALGAMATE WILL BUILD

Packing House in Arcadia At An Early Date. Represented That Not Less Than 160 Acres of Truck is Planted in This Section.

A joint meeting of the Peace River Truck Growers' Association and the Belgium Association was held at the court house last Saturday for the purpose of discussing the advisability of consolidating the two associations into one big organization. There was a full attendance upon this meeting, and it was the consensus of opinion of the members present that it was the logical thing to do for various reasons. One of the main objects in consolidating was to get all the growers to pool their truck, so that car lot shipments could be secured in order to induce buyers to come down and purchase their products, making settlement for same f. o. b. the platform of the depots.

The matter was finally voted on and carried unanimously.

It was brought out that it was absolutely necessary to have a building somewhere in Arcadia for the assembling of all truck preparatory to grading and packing ready for shipment. Mr. Grant Orr made the suggestion that a committee be appointed to go before the Commercial Club with the request that this body lend some support to the movement, as he felt confident that with even an endorsement from the Commercial Club the money needed to erect this building could be raised among the business men of Arcadia.

On motion Messrs. Grant Orr, B. B. Smith and R. S. King were appointed as the committee to present the matter to the Commercial Club, and report back to the meeting held last night for the purpose of perfecting organization of the new body.

At this meeting the first business transacted was the election of officers for the ensuing year, which resulted as follows:

President, F. S. Markett.
Vice-president, C. E. McRae.
Secretary-treasurer, C. E. Gibson.
Board of directors: Grant Orr, R. S. King, George Chanoles, S. H. Calpepper, G. B. Eiston, J. L. Livingston and C. E. McRae.

The following committees were appointed by President Markett:

On constitution and by-laws: B. B. Smith, George Chandler and R. S. King.

Committee on when and what to plant and on soils: Joseph C. W. H. V. R. Turley and R. S. King.
Just at this stage Mr. Russell King was on his feet ready to make re-

port that the committee met with the board of governors and the committee on new enterprises of the Commercial Club Monday night, October 9th and presented the matter to the members present. The board of governors was so impressed with the proposition that a committee consisting of W. M. Platt and R. S. King was appointed to make a canvass among the business men of Arcadia Tuesday for the purpose of raising a part of the funds needed, at least. So enthusiastic were the members present that practically \$100 was subscribed among them before leaving the meeting.

After making a partial canvass of the city Tuesday, Mr. King reported that they had practically enough subscribed as a donation by the business men of Arcadia with which to erect the building. He said they would finish the canvass Wednesday.

On motion of Mr. Orr the Arcadia Commercial Club was extended a rising vote of thanks for the endorsement of their proposition, and the liberal donations of its members towards the cause.

Mr. J. A. Bush, of Wauchula, a prominent grower, who helped organize the Wauchula Association several years ago, was present, and when called on later for a talk stated that the growers in and around Arcadia should feel proud of and appreciate the co-operative spirit manifested by the Arcadia Commercial Club, that the record established by the members in providing the necessary funds with which to erect their building is without a parallel in the state of Florida.

At the meeting last night the information was given out that among the growers alone that have affiliated with the association, there was between 160 and 170 acres of truck planted this fall, and with the remaining ones that have not joined the association, there would be at least 200 acres.

So far the truckers report the finest prospects for a bumper crop ever in their experience, and with favorable weather conditions the next two weeks, the temporary packing house that they propose to erect to take care of their full crop will be entirely inadequate to begin with, we hope.

Capt. C. B. McCall, traffic manager of the C. H. & N. Railway, was present and made the association the proposition to furnish the necessary site for their building for the nominal rent of 6 per cent. of the estimated value of the lot. By motion the C. H. & N. proposition was accepted with thanks. You can always bank on the C. H. & N. backing up (with finances if necessary) any progressive movement along its line. Would that there were more C. H. & N.'s in the country, and there would be an entirely different feeling toward the railroads by the American public.

The truckers will meet again Friday night at the court house.

Mr. A. D. Mercer is very ill at his home, and his relatives and friends are fearful of the worst.